



**Connecticut Restaurant Association Testimony
Before the Public Safety and Security Committee**

HB 5277 AAC Mixed Martial Arts

The Connecticut Restaurant Association represents over 500 restaurants and restaurant affiliated businesses across the state. The CRA is the voice of Connecticut's hospitality industry in advocacy, awareness and education. Restaurants in Connecticut employ over 145,000 people, are a driving force in the state's economy and generate tremendous tax revenue. We are affiliated with the National Restaurant Association and Connecticut's only not-for-profit representing the state's restaurant industry. We are committed to the advancement of the hospitality industry in Connecticut.

HB 5277 legalizes mixed martial arts, while at the same time subjecting it to the same rigorous laws which govern boxing in Connecticut. The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection will also be required to promulgate additional regulations to ensure safety. The CRA supports HB 5277 and any legislative proposals that help to grow our economy and encourage people to take advantage of the many wonderful dining establishments our state has to offer.

Passage of this proposal will create jobs in our state and bring more people into cities such as Hartford and Bridgeport, both of which can only help the hospitality industry. Economic projections from the XL Center alone estimate significant increases in business for not only Hartford restaurants, but for the city's hotels and parking facilities as well.

The CRA encourages you to vote in favor of HB 5277. Thank you.